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IN INSULAR POSSESSIONS.

HAWAII.

Cholera Carriers in Immigrants.

Surg. Trotter reported from Honolulu March 17 that 2 cholera carriers had been found in the persons of Filipinos who had arrived March 5 from Hongkong.

Examination of Rats and Mongoose.

Rats and mongoose have been examined in Hawaii as follows: Honolulu, week ended February 21, 1914, 311; Hilo, week ended February 14, 1914, 2,537. No plague-infected animal was found.

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.

Cholera—Plague—Manila.

Surg. Heiser, chief quarantine officer and director of health for the Philippine Islands, reports the occurrence of cholera and plague in Manila as follows: Three weeks ended February 14, 1914, 12 cases of cholera with 4 deaths and 7 cases of plague with 7 deaths.

Dr. Heiser further reports:

Referring further to the reappearance of plague in Manila¹ the following additional cases have occurred:

On January 27 a case was removed from 143 Calle Rosario, which is the same address from which a Chinaman with plague was taken on January 24.

On January 31 a man and his wife were found dead at 675 Calle Echague. There was a rat hole near the bed in which these two victims slept, and upon removing the floor immediately under the bed several mummified rats were found, but it was impossible to demonstrate by laboratory investigation that these rodents had died of plague.

Later, 3 more cases of plague were discovered in different parts of the city. Investigations soon showed, however, that the true addresses of these patients were in the same block in which plague had occurred the previous week.

¹ Public Health Reports, Mar. 6, 1914, p. 581.

The infected district was immediately surrounded with a gang of over 100 laborers and sanitary inspectors, and these gradually worked inward from the periphery of the zone to the place in which the last human victims had lived.

On February 3 one case occurred at 116 Calle Hormiga. No further cases occurred between February 3 and February 11. On the latter date another case occurred in the person of a Chinaman who lived at No. 206 Juan Luna. The back of these premises abuts on the back of the premises of No. 143 Calle Rosario, in which the plague case reported above occurred.

In carrying out the antirrat measures in the house at 206 Juan Luna 65 dead rats were found in the hollow partitions and ceilings and underneath floors. The rats are at present being examined at the bureau of science and the report of the findings will be submitted later.

A study of the outbreak shows that there are now two different centers of infection. One is the so-called Echague district, and the other in the block bounded by Calles Rosario, Hormiga, Juan Luna, Dasmariñas. The true center of the plague infection of this latter block would appear to be in the premises in which the 65 dead rats were found. Each resident in the block has been furnished with a letter advising him of the danger with which he is confronted and the necessity for immediately carrying out ratproofing measures. (Copy of this circular letter is inclosed.) This whole block is an active wholesale and retail center, and in addition is thickly populated, and the living conditions on the whole are extremely insanitary. Many persons use the warehouses in which merchandise is stored as sleeping quarters, most of them sleeping on the bags or boxes without any beds or bedding.

It may also be of interest to report that the back of the premises of 143 Rosario and 116 Hormiga was occupied by a business concern which imports Japanese goods, and on these premises there were actually found many crates of lamp chimneys, lamps, and other glassware packed in straw, and rats were found nesting therein. In view of the fact that plague has been more or less constantly present in many ports and manufacturing centers in the Orient it would appear not unlikely that the disease may have been introduced by rats or fleas with merchandise.

[Circular.]

BUREAU OF HEALTH,
Manila, February 12, 1914.

To whom it may concern:

You are hereby informed that the district bounded by Calles Rosario, Juan Luna, Dasmariñas and Plaza Calderon (and possibly the neighborhood bordering upon this congested district) is a dangerous one for all persons living or conducting business therein on account of the presence there of extensive rat plague. Six human cases

(with 5 deaths) have recently developed there and many dead rats have been found. All human cases have been directly traced to rats dead from plague.

The bureau of health is now doing everything within its power to make this district safe, but the attention of all citizens, property owners, and tenants is called to the fact that they are required by law to keep their premises free from rats and to abolish all structural conditions of the buildings which favor the harboring of rats. This means rat proofing and owners are earnestly urged to perform this necessary work now, under the direction of the bureau of health.

As a temporary expedient and safeguard all interiors, walls, floors, and ceilings should be sprayed with kerosene daily, or at intervals of two days to kill the fleas which carry plague from rats to human beings. All dark insanitary places used for living rooms should be vacated at once; all merchandise should be piled upon trusses at least a foot above the floor; all straw, shavings and other material attractive to rats for nesting should be removed and burned and all food materials upon which rats may feed and live should be placed in covered boxes, bins, or cans.

All rat holes should be permanently closed and all broken cement or masonry should be repaired.

Observance of these instructions may save the lives of yourselves, your families, and your tenants. It is your duty to do your part in this matter, a part which neither the bureau of health nor the government can do for you.

Through very great effort the bureau of health has controlled plague in Manila and the Philippine Islands during the last two years.

Residents must now do their part and owners of property must permanently make their buildings safe for tenants, both for business and residential purposes.

VICTOR G. HEISER,
Director of Health.